

Cayenne, Ecuador, and through the northern part of South America, about one in six are red; in Panama and Central America, about one in ten are red; while of the thirty or more examined from the region north of Central America, no definite red phase is perceptible.

So much has been written during the last hundred years upon the birds of this genus that it is possible these two phases of plumage have been noticed and recorded; but in looking over all the references made by English and American naturalists I fail to find any notice of its occurrence. I therefore give my observations for what they are worth, as aids to the interesting though but little understood subject of dichromatism among birds.—GEO. B. SENNETT, *Am. Mus. Nat. Hist., New York City.*

On the Further Occurrence of *Otocoris alpestris praticola* in Chester County, South Carolina.—That the advent of Prairie Horned Larks does not alone depend upon exceptional cold in this immediate region is manifest; for the past winter has been noteworthy for its clemency and for the presence of these birds in comparative abundance. December 3, the first specimens of the season were secured, but a small flock, presumably of the same subspecies, was seen a week earlier. From this time forward until the end of January they were met with continually, and a few were noted at intervals through February. The situation where my observations were chiefly conducted was a closely cropped pasture of about a dozen acres, sloping gently to the southward. Here, during the two months mentioned, I never failed in twenty visits to find one or more flocks. As I obtained, from the first, only *praticola*, I assiduously pressed my investigations, hoping definitely to settle for the present season, at least, the true status of the two forms of *Otocoris* reported as occurring in this section. During December I shot one hundred three females and sixteen males, all of which belonged to the western race. In January thirty females and ten males of like kind were procured. A larger number could have been taken, but I desisted from shooting others as soon as I became satisfied as to the real character of the individuals constituting a company. A feature of marked prominence was the preponderance of females. Only on one occasion (Jan. 10) did I capture an equal number of both sexes.

| | Sex. | Length. | | Extent. | | Wing. | | Tail. | |
|---------|------|---------|--------|---------|--------|-------|--------|-------|-------|
| | | in. | mm. | in. | mm. | in. | mm. | in. | mm. |
| Maximum | ♂ | 7.40 | 187.96 | 13.30 | 337.82 | 4.18 | 106.17 | 3.14 | 79.75 |
| Minimum | ♂ | 6.95 | 176.53 | 12.60 | 320.04 | 3.93 | 99.82 | 2.75 | 69.85 |
| Average | ♂ | 7.14 | 181.36 | 13.03 | 330.96 | 4.05 | 102.87 | 2.99 | 75.94 |
| Maximum | ♀ | 6.85 | 173.99 | 12.60 | 320.04 | 3.93 | 99.82 | 2.88 | 73.15 |
| Minimum | ♀ | 6.40 | 162.56 | 11.80 | 299.72 | 3.62 | 91.95 | 2.45 | 62.23 |
| Average | ♀ | 6.66 | 169.16 | 12.23 | 310.64 | 3.77 | 95.75 | 2.69 | 68.32 |

A parallel instance of male birds wintering further north than their consorts is exhibited in the case of the Towhee. Relatively few females of that species are found during the winter months in this locality.

About sixty-five per cent of the females collected had the chin and throat primrose-yellow. In several it attained an intensity corresponding to that of the brightest males. This depth of color does not necessarily indicate an approach toward *alpestris*; as the wing in one of the deeper examples measures only 3.66 in., while in a white-throated specimen it reaches 3.88 in.

In the foregoing table are given the dimensions of twenty-six males and one hundred thirty-three females. The length of tail is the actual length of the longest rectrix. In the 'wing' the chord is given.—LEVERETT M. LOOMIS, *Chester, S. C.*

Corydomorphæ.—The Lark family, Alaudidæ, represents a particular superfamily series of true oscine passerine birds, distinguished from other Passeres by the non-oscine scutelliplantation, and may appropriately bear the above name, conformably with other passerine groups ending in *-morphæ* in Dr. Scater's terminology.—ELLIOTT COUES, *Washington, D. C.*

Molothrus ater again in Massachusetts in Winter.—On Jan. 31, 1888, I shot a male Cow Bunting at Watertown, Mass. It was in an old field with a large flock of Goldfinches (*Spinus tristis*), feeding on the weeds and stubble that had not been covered by the snow. The bird was thin, but otherwise in good condition.

This is the third time that this species has been found wintering in New England.*—ARTHUR P. CHADBOURNE, *Cambridge, Mass.*

Blackbird Flights at Burlington, Iowa.—The autumnal migrations of the Icteridæ at Burlington, Iowa, are notable chiefly on account of the immense flocks of certain Blackbirds which congregate in that vicinity. The extensive swamps bordering the Mississippi River above and below the city, on the Illinois side, form an especially favorable rendezvous for these birds, three species of which are represented, nearly in equal numbers—*Quiscalus quiscula æneus*, *Scolecophagus carolinus*, and *Agelaius phœniceus*. During September and October the cornfields of Iowa are visited by countless numbers of these black marauders, which wander about in mixed flocks of several thousands, passing the day in the fields and the night in the woodland or marshes. And it is during this period that so many thousands are poisoned and killed by the farmers. About the first of October these birds begin to appear from the more northern districts, pouring into the Burlington swamps in myriads, and by the middle of the month immense numbers have here collected. Just before sunrise vast flocks begin to rise out of the swamps and radiate in all directions towards

* Two were killed at Belmont, Mass., Jan. 2, 1883, by Mr. Spelman (Bull. N. O. C., Vol. VIII, 1883, p. 121). One seen at Taftsville, Vt. from Dec. 30 to Jan. 30 (C. O. T[racy], Orn. and Oölg., Vol. IX, 1884, p. 45).